

THE SWORD OF THE LORD

EDITED BY JOHN R. RICE

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"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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Moses, the Back-slidder for Forty Years

BY REV. SAM MORRIS

(Third article of *Backsliders Brought Back*)

Every child brought up in a Christian home and Sunday school is familiar with the wonderful story of Moses who was born in a time of great perplexity and distress on the part of the Hebrew people as they toiled in slavery and anguish in Egypt; born at a dangerous time, for Herod had decreed that all male children should be killed. But we read in Hebrews 11:23:

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

This verse tells us that faith overcame fear and that the parents—and I am so glad it is plural—both father and mother, not just one of them, had vision enough to see the promise in their baby, and faith enough in God to care for him. It is a very sickening sight to me when some mother or father talks to me about the waywardness of their children and then say:

"I feel like I ought to do thus and so, but what would the neighbors think?"

My good friends, our duty is to do the will of God toward our children, in faith. Let God take care of the neighbors.

I remember when I was a small boy about seven years of age, we lived in Childress, Texas. Unfortunately father and mother were separated during that time. Mother was a widow; washed for a living. There was a little boy in our community that had an attractive personality, but who was very wicked. He cursed and smoked and indulged in unbecoming jokes. He and my brother and I were playing one day in our yard when mother came to the porch, singled him out and said:

"You are that little boy that smokes and tells ugly stories and curses, aren't you?"

The little boy didn't say anything because he knew he was guilty. My brother and I also knew he was guilty. Mother then said:

"You cannot play with my children in my yard. If you will quit being that kind of a boy, you can come and play with them, but I do not allow my boys to play with boys who curse and smoke and tell ugly stories."

The little boy started home crying. My brother and I raised a protest, only to be rebuked by our mother with the threat that if we didn't hush, she would whip us both. The little boy went on home crying, and told his mother what "that old widow Morris said." The mother soon hurried over to a neighbor with scathing words of denunciation about that "old widow over there who washes for a living and who thinks her kids are better than my boy." So the story started around the community. It wasn't long until one of the neighbors came over to our house, and in

a very guarded tone began by saying:

"Mrs. Morris, there is a story going around the community that I feel like you ought to know. I know it isn't so, but old lady So and So over here is telling that you ran her boy out of your yard and would not let him play with your children because he smokes and curses and tells ugly stories. Now I know you didn't do that, but I think you ought to know that it is being told."

I shall never forget my mother's answer. It has been an inspiration to me a good many times. She looked the woman straight in the eyes, and without a quiver in her voice replied:

"It is so. Every word of it is so, and what's more, if he comes back over here I will do it again. And if Mrs. So and So doesn't want me to run her children out of my yard, then let her teach them to be clean and not to curse and smoke and tell ugly stories, and whether she likes for me to do so or not doesn't worry me in the least. I have two little boys that I love dearly and I want them to grow up to be good Christian men, and I know if I let them associate with other boys that curse and smoke and tell ugly stories that my boys will get to doing the same thing. They may go that way after they get grown, but while they are little boys and I have supervision of them, they are not going to do it."

We hear much today about how the young people are going to the devil. It is my firm conviction that the trouble is not with the young people. The trouble is with the parents. The children are going to the devil because they are only trying to keep up with ma and pa. Like the little children who, at the time of Jesus' triumphal entry, echoed the cry of their parents: "Hosanna to the son of David," our boys and girls merely echo what we utter before them.

So powerful was the influence of Moses' mother over him during the years that she did have his training in her hands that the influence of the court of Pharaoh could not supersede the influence of his mother, for we read in Hebrews 11:24 and 25:

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

"Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

This choice of Moses was made when he was forty years of age. Just how long he was under the guidance of his mother, we do not know. The Scripture is not plain on that. We know that following the discovery of Moses as a little child in the ark of bulrushes, Pharaoh's daughter employed Moses' mother to care for him. "And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son" (Exo. 2:10). Moreover, Stephen tells us in Acts 7:21-23:

"And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

"And when he was full forty years old, it came into his

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"Ye Must Be Born Again"

(Sunday Night Sermon of John R. Rice as Preached in Maywood, California, in Revival October 8, 1939. Stenographically Reported)

Tonight I am going to preach on "Ye Must Be Born Again," and the Scripture is found in the third chapter of the book of John.

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

"2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."

Now this fellow is a Pharisee, and if you turn to the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, you will find what they were. They were clean; they tithed; they prayed in public. They were good moral people; the strictest sect of religious people the world ever saw.

"3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

"4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Listen to what Jesus said:

"5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water (washed) and of the Spirit (new life) he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

"6. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

"7. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

The Word of God comes to cleanse the sinner from sins and the Holy Spirit of God comes in to make a new creature, the new life of Christ in him.

That which is flesh is only flesh. When you were born the first time you were born of flesh, that is, by mother and father. That is not the same as the Spirit.

"8. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

"9. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

"10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"

There are lots of preachers unconverted, multitudes of church people unconverted. Jesus said,

"You a master of Israel and don't know how to be a Christian? You

must have a new heart, you must be born again."

"11. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

"12. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

"13. And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

Jesus said, "I am the only one that can come down and tell you how to get to Heaven. I am the only one that can you what goes on there. I am now in touch with the Father. If you don't listen to me, nobody else can ever tell you how to get to Heaven."

"14. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up;

"15. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

"16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

"17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

"18. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

"19. And this is the condemnation (that is why you go to Hell) that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

"20. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

"21. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

The Divine Must

"Ye must be born again," Jesus said. Isn't that strange? That is a divine must. There are only a few things we must do. At our house, when money comes in, there are certain things we must pay. Sometimes if we have a little extra, we will do other things if we can. So there are some musts on our program. With God there are some musts. God didn't say, "I advise you that it would be a good deal safer if you were born again. I would really much prefer that you were born again." No, He didn't say that. He didn't say, "Some people really need to be born again." He said, and said it three times, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"

and "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." and then He said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Here is one divine must. You remember the poor Philippian jailor told about in the sixteenth chapter of Acts — he knew there

was something he must do. He came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He knew he was a sinner and was condemned. He said, "I feel tonight like I am about to go to Hell. What must I do? What must I do?" So there are a very few things we must do in this world. What are some of them?

One of them is that you are going to have to die; you must die. You may say, "Brother Rice, I have to live, don't I?" You give that excuse for selling beer or running a dance hall or something else. "I must live," you say, and with that excuse you stay away from church. No, Brother, you have to die and meet God. You must die.

Well, what else? "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." You must meet God. You will die and meet God.

What else? You must spend eternity somewhere. You will spend it in Heaven or in Hell. There are only a few musts and one is, "Ye must be born again."

You know in India people drive for long, long ways to get to the sacred water of the Ganges River where they say that those sacred waters will wash away their sins. There multitudes bathe. They take some of this water back home with them, this sacred water of the Ganges River, and they think that this water will some way gain favor with God. People come, and women throw their babies in there to be eaten by the crocodiles, in that river where they hope their sins will be forgiven.

I saw a picture the other day of a man. Long, long he walked. He was a Moslem going to Mecca, thinking when he got to Mecca maybe his sins would be forgiven. It would be worth a lifetime of effort to be saved.

You must be saved. Isn't it strange how heathen people think of everything in the world; and if they had millions of dollars, they would pay it gladly to be saved. Yet you who know salvation is free do not come and be saved! I did not say that you must be saved. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

REVIVAL NOTES

The editor is in the second week of the revival with the First Baptist Church of Maywood, California. Crowds have been good from the beginning. The first real invitation was given on Thursday night of last week when ten came forward — conversions and reclamations. There have been many professions since then; about twenty-five in the four services Sunday. There seems to have been a real and blessed revival in the hearts of the people.

It has been a real joy to have fellowship with Pastor Lyman H. Coker. We have also enjoyed a happy visit with Dr. Louis Talbot of the Los Angeles Bible Institute and The Church of the Open Door, and a happy day's outing at Santa Catalina Island, twenty miles out in the Pacific.

The present plans call for the revival services to close Sunday, and we will return to Dallas at once, God willing.

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Moses, the Backslider For Forty Years

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heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel."

But quite evidently the choice of Moses to suffer affliction with the people of God came when he was forty years of age. He turned his back upon the pleasures of Egypt, upon the courts of Pharaoh, upon the wealth and favor of that great kingdom, and chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. The author of Hebrews tells us that he did it because "he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb. 11:26). Stephen tells us that he understood the purposes of God and felt the call of God to be a deliverer to his people.

"For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not" (Acts 7:25).

Moses' Backsliding

It was a noble purpose that stirred in the heart of Moses by faith, and it was a noble choice that he made to execute that purpose. But unfortunately he ran into difficulty. We are told in Exodus 2:11-15:

"And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

"And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

"And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smiteth thou thy fellow?

"And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

"Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

Thus Moses became a murderer and a fugitive from justice. He fled into the land of Midian and became a herder of sheep, and for forty years the purpose of God in Moses' life went unfulfilled. He married, but when children were born to him he did not keep the Jewish covenant of circumcision. Those, so far as the records show, were forty barren years, devoid of spiritual realities, and certainly devoid of any spiritual service on the part of Moses.

Moses' Recommission

At the burning bush God recommissioned Moses. He said to Moses:

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

"And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great

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sight, why the bush is not burnt.

"And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

"And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

"Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

"And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

"And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

"Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

"Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exo. 3:1-10).

The extent to which Moses had backsidden during those forty years of sheep herding is best revealed by the way he argued and hummed and hawed with God when God called upon him to go down into Egypt. Forty years before he had been on fire for God, anxious to deliver his people and zealous for their safety. But now he tells God that the people won't believe him, that he isn't eloquent, and that he is not suitable to carry out this work. It reminds a person of the flimsy, senseless excuses that men offer today for their backsidden conditions.

But after much persuasion and promising Moses that Aaron should be his spokesman in Egypt, God succeeds in getting Moses to go to Egypt. The subsequent story of Moses' life and accomplishments in the next forty years that he spent upon this earth is one of the most thrilling chapters in the annals of men, sacred or profane. He brought the plagues upon Egypt; he led the children of Israel across the Red Sea dry shod; he followed the cloud by day and the fire by night; he ate manna from Heaven, drank water from the rock, and feasted upon the quails that God sent in limitless numbers about the camp. He built the first tabernacle; he received the Ten Commandments; gave the law; wrote the first five books of the Bible, and for forty years amid severe trials and hardships, enjoyed the blessed companionship of God as few men have ever enjoyed it. And when God had finished with him here, He took him up on Mount Nebo, showed him all the promised land, and kissed him to sleep. He appeared on the mount of transfiguration during the ministry of Jesus, and we are told in Revelation 15:3 that the redeemed hosts are to sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, in that final triumphant day when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.

The experience and record of Moses but re-emphasizes the fact that because men sin and get out of fellowship with God, do those things which are displeasing to Him and waste, in such cases, many years in a backsidden state, does not necessarily mean that they have to go on to the end of their life in that backsidden state. God can recommission and use them again. I received a letter in response to my Voice of Temperance broadcast on the Mexican border from a man living in Ohio. He wrote: "Dear Brother Morris:

"I have just listened to your radio talk on the evils of drink. What you say is distressingly true. I was reared in a home of infidelity. I learned to chew tobacco before I cut all my teeth. I learned to drink alcoholic beverages by the time

"Ye Must Be Born Again"

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Jesus said that. He said, "Ye must be born again."

You may say, "Brother Rice, my case is a peculiar one. I do the best I know how."

Well, suppose you do. The best you know how is not good enough. But nobody does the best he knows how. When you take God's name in vain, you didn't do the best you knew how. You say, "I go to church." Nicodemus did, too. You say, "Brother Rice, I pay my tithe." Nicodemus did, too, and so did all the Pharisees. You may say, "I am good to my family. I take care of my family," but that is not good enough. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." You say, "I am a member of the church." That is nothing. Nicodemus was one of the seventy rulers in the Jew's religion, a member of the Sanhedrin, and yet Jesus said, "Ye must be born again or go to Hell."

I preached on the square at Petersburg, Illinois, some two or three weeks ago in a revival meeting. A large group of people heard me. It was on Saturday night.

A man came along the next day and said, "Brother Rice, I heard you on the square and I enjoyed it very greatly. Listen, I am anxious about this business of being born again. I am a Presbyterian elder and have been in that church for forty years and have been an elder for about thirty years, and I know nothing about being born again, and I have not been as far as I know. I want to talk to you some other time about that."

He was a Presbyterian elder and had never been born again and knew nothing about it. I tell you now, friends, all over this country there are plenty of people who are going to Hell because they lack this one thing. Jesus said, "Ye must be born again." Nicodemus said, "I don't understand that. How can a man as old as I be born again? I don't see any need for that." People say, "Well, Brother Rice, I am a member of the church. I have been baptized; I take the Lord's Supper and I do the best I know — I pray. Don't you think I will get by?" I answer back in the words of Jesus: Nobody ever did and nobody ever will get to Heaven unless God works a miracle and makes you a new creature and gives you a new heart. Without

I could walk. But when I was sixteen years of age, at a mourner's bench in an old-fashioned Methodist meeting, I gave my heart to the Lord and was gloriously saved by His wonderful grace. He called me into the ministry and I served Him faithfully, becoming one of the leaders in my denomination and serving in almost every official capacity. I conducted evangelistic meetings that were singly blessed of God in the salvation of souls. Many of my converts subsequently entered the ministry and mission fields, and have carried the gospel to earth's remotest bound. But a few years ago, after such a useful and blessed ministry, this old habit which had been conquered for years reasserted itself and with increased vigor took hold so that I drifted away from God and into deeper sin. Family Bible readings were abandoned. The marriage vow was violated. And tonight as I sat and listened to your talk, I am out of the ministry, away from God, and my ordination certificate is a ghost that haunts me from the wall where it hangs. I trust that you will pray for me."

That was three years ago. I wrote the man an encouraging letter and sent him a copy of my little book on Jonah entitled, *The Glory of God's Second Call*. The radio season closed without my hearing from him. And several months later I spoke in the town where he lived. He had confessed his backsiddings, renewed his covenants to God, had been relicensed by his church, and was preaching again. He got up and gave his testimony in my meeting that night. I have since had several communications from him, and the man is happily serving the Lord.

My appeal to you is, dear reader, if perchance you should be in a similar backsidden condition, whether you are a preacher or not, renew your covenants to the Lord. He has work for you to do, and by His grace you can do it.

the new birth, nobody can get to Heaven and see God; none can ever enter the kingdom of God. "Ye must be born again."

I know some people who have so many ways to be saved, they think. "Well, we are just going to Heaven different routes. We are all working for the same place. We all have the same place in mind." But if you have any route which leaves this out, you will not get there. Somebody was confirmed back yonder. I know. And baptized. Sure. And if that is all you have, you went down in the water a dry sinner and came up a wet sinner and you went on your way two-fold more a child of Hell than before. It takes a new heart.

You say, "Brother Rice, I give more than a lot of these hypocritical church members and I live better than a lot of them do." But the best life you ever lived in this world is not good enough. Only be satisfied with a new heart.

You may say, "I wish I had a peach tree in my yard." Out in west Texas they have lots of Mesquite trees all around. They are mighty fine for some things, but you can't grow Elberta peaches on Mesquite trees. (Out here in California are some good looking peaches, but they are like some Christians, only fine on the outside. I don't want to run down California. Everybody has been apologizing because it has been cold and the clouds have been overcast. Well, you really do the best you can in California, but California isn't Texas! Your kind of peaches are not what I am talking about.) You say, "I wish I had a peach tree." So you get a bunch of Elberta peaches and tie them on the Mesquite tree. Presto, chango! Now you have a peach tree! That is the way with some of you and your religion. It is put on the outside. But birds come along and peck on the peaches and after a while they begin to rot and fall off and all you have is that same old Mesquite tree. You say, "I will reform and change my way, I will turn over a new leaf." But your life is the same kind it was before because it comes out of the same dirty heart. You say that you are going to turn over a new leaf. "I am going to quit cursing," you say. So you just get a little mad now. And about your smoking. Instead of two packages a day you will only smoke one because you have turned over a new leaf. Sure! You are a different one of the same kind! But you are still a sinner. What you need is a new heart. You need God to make a new man out of you. If you don't have that, you are as cer-

tain for Hell as you can be. "Ye must be born again."

I remember I preached on this text once in a country church at Liberty, Cooke County, Texas. I preached on "Ye Must Be Born Again." A man out there, the president of the Farmer's Union and a trustee of the school, bragged about how moral and fine he was. I preached that night on "Ye Must Be Born Again." He had bragged about being a good moral man and that he was as good as the church members. His name was Martin.

When I got through with the service, he came to me and said, "I don't like what you said. Somebody has been talking to you about me and now you personate me in public."

I said, "I didn't know who you were and I don't know anything about you. But if you haven't been born again, you are going to Hell. You are bound for the bottomless pit unless you let God make a new heart out of the old heart."

And, my friend, that is for you tonight, too. You are not fit for Heaven.

You say, "Well, preacher, that is all right for some people, but I grew up in the church."

You just grew up where you hadn't any business, then. This is the deadly thing about bringing a little baby and putting a little wafer on his head when he can't help it, and then telling him he is a church member. That has damned many people — church members who have never been born again. I tell you, it is a sin to teach anybody that. Nobody has any business in the church unless he has been born again. If you are not born again, you are a poor, damned, Hell-bound, Hell-deserving sinner, and Hell is where you are going! When people are saved, they ought to join the church and get in with God's people. God's sheep should come out from the goats, sure, and be baptized and put on the whole armor of God. You should get with the people of God and live with the people of God. But if you have never had a real change of heart, if God Almighty hasn't forgiven your sins and changed your heart and made you a new creature, you are a dirty hypocrite in the church, and you are going to Hell unless you have a new heart. "Marvel not that I say unto thee, ye must be born again." There is no exception. Nobody ever was saved without that and nobody ever will be. Ye must be born again.

Do you have a new heart tonight? If you haven't a new heart, you had better be seeking it. I am not talking about an emotion, so that you feel as light as a feather and can hear the flopping of angel's

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Jewish Persecution and Bible Prophecies

BY JOHN R. RICE, D.D.

One of the strangest and most alarming facts of the current world affairs is the growth of Jewish persecution. What does it mean? Editor John R. Rice has written a pamphlet, *Jewish Persecution and Bible Prophecies*, which has been published by Fundamental Truth Publishers and is now on sale. There are forty-eight pages, seven chapters. This book answers the following questions:

1. Why Does Satan Cause Persecution of the Jews?
2. Why Does God Permit It?
3. How Long Will It Continue?
4. What Will Happen to Jewish Enemies?
5. Will the Dictator-Complex End Up in a Jewish-Hating Antichrist?
6. When Will True Christians and True Jews Unite?
7. Is the Long-Expected Jewish Messiah Coming?

There are remarkable quotations, a poem from an unknown Christian, and Mark Twain's appraisal of the Jew. There are many, many Scriptures. Every lover of Israel will want one. I wish a million copies could be put in the hands of Jews who are troubled about persecution. Let us pray that many Jews will be led to Christ by this book which explains Jewish persecution in the only possible way, by the Bible.

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wings. But unless you submitted yourself to God and depended on Jesus Christ to forgive your sins and unless God wrought a change in your heart, made a change you could not make — if God didn't make you a Christian inside, you are not a Christian. You are a wolf in sheep's clothing. Outside you are a whitened sepulchre but inside you are full of dead men's bones. You will have to have a new heart or you are going to Hell and that is what you deserve. There is nothing in the Bible clearer than that nor more emphatically, definitely stated than that "Ye must be born again."

People say, "I will try to change." People are not saved by changing. They are saved by God changing them. You say, "Well, all right, I will turn over a new leaf." You don't need a new leaf; you need a new heart. It is not something you do. It is something God does for you. You are going to Hell and you deserve to go to Hell unless you let God make a change. God must change the heart. Until He does, you are still a child of the devil. Ye must be born again.

Why has a little one got to be born again? A tender child that grows up in a Christian home and is taught to pray — here this little one, my own baby, has gone to church all her life. She has learned to bow her head at the table when we pray. She has been taught how wicked it is to sin. She can clap her hands and go through the motion of the songs of the Cradle Roll department. And then very early in life we keep her as near to the Lord as possible. We try to teach her right from wrong. Then you say, "Does she need to be born again?" Yes. When you tied the peaches on the tree, the showing was all on the outside. It didn't change the nature of the tree a particle. So if you don't have a change of heart you are going to Hell. (I am not talking about little children going to Hell.)

A child will not until he comes to the time of accountability). All this teaching you have done is wasted and ruined as far as changing the heart is concerned. God Himself insisted upon it. Jesus Christ is the Author of it, that "Ye must be born again."

Why must you be born again? Because you were born wrong the first time. That which is of the flesh is flesh and that which is of the Spirit is spirit. Those two are as different as light from darkness, as different as night and day, as different as Hell and Heaven. A man is a sinner. All mankind are sinners. Everybody here is a sinner. All are alike in this. (My child, this little girl, Sarah Joy, is taught to say "Daddy's girl." I think she is mighty sweet. In private I think she is the sweetest, but in public I think all children are alike. Publicly, I admit yours are sweet, too. Publicly, any age is fine, but privately, the best age is two years old and a few days). But I tell you the truth, this little one of mine was born in this world, and you know my wife has a very catty way of saying, "She is like her daddy" when she does something wrong. "She is a feather out of the old gander," my wife says. You men know how your wives talk. They talk about you that way, too. The truth of the matter, a child born in this world is sweet, is precious — but innocent, they

are not. My children are natural-born sinners. Yours are, too. They have everything in them by nature to make them evil. Do not misunderstand me. No little baby goes to Hell. I am sure about that. The Bible says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." What we lost in Adam we gained back in Christ. Nobody goes to Hell because of Adam's sin, but rather go there after they know right from wrong and deliberately choose sin. The reason you must be born again is because you have a wicked heart. David said, "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." We teach our little children to tell the truth as soon as they learn to talk, but it is easier not to tell the truth. Children do not naturally tell the truth. They take after their daddies and mothers. My little girl can sit down with your little girl on the floor. After awhile yours gets a teddy bear that mine wants, so mine takes it away from yours and pushes yours in the face. Why? Because all babies are natural-born thieves. They don't have to be taught that. I will tell you why. They have got to be born again. There is the taint of sin in human nature. Don't fool yourself. The Bible says, "There is none that doeth good, no not one" (Rom. 3:12). Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." You must have a new heart because the old heart is wrong.

I went somewhere not long ago and preached hard on sin. And I suppose because I preached plainly, a girl about sixteen came to me and said, "Brother Rice, we are nice people here. You will like us when you know us."

She was trying to pacify me. She was afraid I would get the wrong impression of her church. I know you are nice, only you are going to Hell. Sure, you are nice. The Bible says that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). There are two things wrong. One thing is that we are wrong by nature. There is something in us that is bent wrong, headed wrong. There is something in us that is pointed the wrong way until it is easier to sin than to do things right. Take Dan Matthews, for instance. There is something in you, Dan — it is easier to lose your temper down at work than it is for you not to. You like to tell the truth. You deserve the credit for all the trying you do! It is easier to do wrong because you are turned that way.

Then the second thing wrong is that you do wrong on purpose when you know better. After you sin you don't worry so much about it. You do wrong and know better.

First we are sinners by nature, and second, we are sinners by choice, all because we have a bad heart. What you need tonight is a new heart. Ye must be born again. You have to have a new heart. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

My, what pride we had in our family! So did you. But I don't care how nice your family is or whether they were one of the First Families of Virginia or one of the 400, they are going to Hell if they don't get born again. They will

wake up in the fires of torment. You are a sinner, and being a sinner, you must have a new heart.

And Nicodemus said, "That is mighty strange talk. I am a member of the Sanhedrin, a Jewish leader, a Pharisee, and I live a mighty good life." But Jesus told him, "Ye must be born again," and "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" and "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." And Nicodemus said, "I am rather an old man to begin on me that way. How can a man be born when he is old?" and Jesus answered, "Marvel not. You have to have a new heart." I say, you are a sinner, condemned and ruined. Unless God in His mercy fixes a new heart in you, you are lost. You may say, "Brother Rice, I have a good heart." No, you haven't, not by nature. By nature, the Scripture says, you are a child of Hell.

Take a rattlesnake for an example. God has a laugh on all the scientists. When the scientists invent things, God already had them invented. The human eye is a perfect camera. The microphone of a loudspeaking system or radio — God put one first in the ear. The nerves are the electric wiring. God does it perfectly. God is the perfect scientist. The first hypodermic needle was the hollow tooth of a snake. Rattlesnakes have two teeth in front which are hollow and they fold back when not in use. At the base of each sharp hollow tooth is a sac full of poison. When he strikes with the teeth, the poison is forced through the hollow tooth as through a hypodermic needle, and forced into the wound. All right. You get this little rattlesnake for a pet. You get him before he gets any rattles and you take him home with you and you tie a pink ribbon around his neck. "This is not a poisonous snake," you say. "He doesn't have any rattles. He doesn't have any poison yet, so I will take him home with me. This is just a little bit of a snake, he is not grown." So you take him and feed him food from your table. Besides that, he is in a good home and he can hear you pray and read the Bible. He can listen to that and you will teach him to do better. He is no ordinary rattlesnake. So you feed him from your own table and he grows up big and you let him out. But one day you anger him and he strikes. The hypodermic injection goes into your arm, and if it gets into the blood, it will kill you. It swells and swells, and if you don't cut off the poison immediately before much of it gets into the blood and into the heart, it is good-bye! He is a rattlesnake just like the rest. He may have been raised in a good home and fed from the nicest table, but he is poisonous just the same. So you may be a church member, you may have been baptized or confirmed or vaccinated, but you will wake up in the fires of Hell, for you are still a sinner until you are born again. Some of you women here are nice, respectable women, but you have a rotten heart and you are Hell-bound, Hell-deserving sinners. You must be born again or you are going to Hell.

"Well, Brother Rice, I don't mean anything wrong when I say," you say.

Brother, you sure don't mean anything good by it! You are a bum, with nothing to do but to curse and take God's name in vain and say evil remarks about the women. You have no respect for them. A man is not decent who curses and takes God's name in vain. You do it so much you don't think there is anything bad about it. You have a dirty, rotten heart. I am not making that up. The Scripture says that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Do you know what makes you curse? Your dirty, blaspheming heart lets it out when you are not watching. It just comes natural to curse. If there is anybody here tonight that does that, I would beg God not only to cleanse me — I remember how my mother used to do when I said something I should not have said. She would take me in the house and get some lye soap and, boy! she washed my mouth out good! I had that kind of a mother. Is there anybody here who had that kind of a mother? The rest of you ought to pray God to give you somebody to take the place of

IF I SHOULD DIE TONIGHT

BELLE E. SMITH

If I should die tonight,
Some friends would call to mind, with loving thought,
Some kindly deed the icy hand had wrought,
Some gentle word the frozen lips had said —
Errands on which the willing feet had sped.
The memory of my selfishness and pride,
My hasty words, would all be put aside,
And so I should be loved and mourned tonight.

If I should die tonight,
Even hearts estranged would turn once more to me,
Recalling other days remorsefully.
The eyes that chill me with averted glance
Would look upon me as of yore, perchance,
And soften in the old familiar way:
For who would war with dumb, unconscious clay?
So I might rest, forgiven of all tonight.

mothers like that. But washing the mouth won't do it. It is the rotten heart inside that needs washing. So God has to wash the heart. The heart is where these things come from. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." I know where adultery comes from and where cursing comes from, where lying comes from. Do you wonder why you lie? You say, "It slipped out. I didn't mean to say it. I didn't mean for anybody to hear me." It slipped out of your mouth because your heart is full of that kind of stuff. Men who tell dirty yarns have rotten hearts. The sin on the outside is a manifestation of a rotten heart inside. The Lord says, "Ye must be born again." If you don't have a new heart, you are going to Hell. I don't care if you are a preacher, an elder, or what you are, you must be born again or there is no hope in this world of your ever seeing God in peace. That is the word of Jesus Christ. A sinner is a sinner by choice. Only God makes you fit for Heaven and He makes you fit by giving you a new heart. You need to be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

You can't see the wind, can you? You can't see the new heart or how one gets it, either. That is one thing you have to leave with God.

You say, "Brother Rice, I can't understand that."

Well, that is not the only thing you can't understand.

One doctor said to another doctor, "You say you are a Christian? There is one thing I can't understand.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

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"Ye Must Be Born Again"

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

stand and that is this business of being born again."

The Christian doctor said to the other doctor, "You can't understand being born again? Doctor, you have been delivering babies for a good many years. Can you understand the first birth, how it is that life comes to this form in the body of the mother? Do you understand that?"

The doctor who was not a Christian said that he never understood it. God forms it, of course.

Then the Christian doctor said, "You can't understand the first birth but you hold back from the second birth because you don't understand that. Life is from God. Life is a miracle and only God can do that."

Somebody says, "I can't understand how God could make Adam out of the dust and breathe into his nostrils the breath of life."

You can't understand that, and God did not intend for you to understand it. If you did, you could do it, too. That is something that only God can do. I can't understand how God can make me a Christian, but if I could understand it, I could make myself a Christian. That is a miracle of God. You can't do that.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

If God in His infinite mercy did not see fit to give you a new heart, you could not be a Christian. Joining a church did not make you a Christian. All the good things you can do will not make you a Christian. Tying those Elberta peaches on that Mesquite tree did not make the Mesquite tree a peach tree. And unless God makes you a Christian inside, you are lost. Joining a church would not make you a Christian any more than walking into a garage would make you an automobile. You can't understand it, but you can believe it, can't you?

I have a little box with some wires and glass tubes and gadgets in it. I open up the lid and turn a little thing, and instantly I can hear radio stations all over the country. It does not even have to warm up. It does not have to be hooked in the wall and connected with electricity. It will run on the battery. I can turn the dial and hear stations hundreds of miles away. Saturday I tuned in on one station at New York and they said, "It is now 4:30." I looked at my watch and it was only 1:30 here. Across the continent, 3,000 miles, I could hear what was happening. I can't understand that. I could not make that box and I do not know how the other fellow could, yet I have preached on twenty or

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thirty stations. I don't spend my time wondering how it works. I do not understand it. But I don't leave the radio because I don't understand all about it.

God gave me a new heart. I have seen drunkards that God has made sober. I have seen harlot women that God has made clean and pure and sweet again. I know that God can and does give a new heart, but you have to leave it with God to change the heart. You cannot do it, but God can. You don't have to understand it, but just believe it. I believe the radio works. I open it up and plug it in and listen and risk it and it happens. I leave it to God to change my heart. Try it. As certainly as you risk Him, God will do what you trust Him to do.

How To Be Born Again

Another word and it is this. "How can I be born again?" you say. At Wheeler, Texas, a good many years ago, I talked to a man about the Lord. I asked, "Are you a Christian?"

He answered back that he was not.

I said, "Don't you want to be?" He said, "I would like to be." "Why aren't you a Christian?" I then asked.

"Because the Bible says you must have a new heart and I have done everything I know and I cannot change my heart, so I cannot be a Christian."

He got it right. He could not do it.

I said, "No, you cannot change your heart, but I know somebody that can and will. I know how you can get it changed."

And as I stood there on the tongue of his wagon, that man, seventy-one years old, and his eleven-year-old grandson, trusted Christ. Oh, friends, Jesus died to make it so we could have a new heart. The boy saw it first, and I talked to the old man and after they were saved I loaned him a pair of trousers to get baptized in!

You may say that you cannot change your heart, and I grant you that you cannot. But, brother, if you want your heart changed, here is the way. Jesus told Nicodemus how. Moses was out there in the wilderness and snakes came and bit the children of Israel. Read the story in the twenty-first chapter of the book of Numbers. The children of Israel grumbled. They "spake against God, and against Moses," the Scripture says. If people get it in for the Lord's preacher, they will talk about him. If you are a preacher and somebody doesn't talk about you, you are not doing right. So they grumbled at God and at Moses. So God sent fiery serpents among them and much people died. They began to die like flies, and the people said, "Moses, pray for us." And remember, one day you are going to want your pastor to pray for you. So Moses prayed. The Lord told Moses to make a brass serpent or snake and put it upon a pole, and if the people were bitten by the serpent, they could look at the serpent and live. A serpent is a type of Satan. You don't like to handle a snake, do you? I don't like them either. Children, do you like snakes? God said, "I will put enmity between thy seed (the serpent) and the woman's seed." God put enmity between the two. So the people grumbled against Moses and against God. When they were bitten in body it showed what had already happened to the heart.

The snakes bit them, and the people began to die. They said, "Moses, what will we do?" The Lord told Moses to make a snake out of brass and put it on a pole and set it out in the middle of the camp and everybody that looks at the snake on the pole would live. "When he looketh upon it, he shall live," the Scripture says. They said, "That is too good to be so. A man that is snakebitten — if he looks at the snake on the pole out there, will he live?" And Moses said, "Yes, everybody that looks will be well."

Somebody snakebitten says, "I think I will try some whiskey." (For some people, whiskey is good for whatever is wrong with them. It is good to make you cold when you are hot, or to make you hot when you are cold. It is good for pneumonia, and when your mother-in-law comes to see you! Somebody else soaks his leg in a bottle of coal oil or uses potassium per-

manganate, or one remedy or another). They said, "No, you will all die unless you do what God said to do." After a while he goes to the door of the tent to gaze on the serpent of brass. Look, all the swelling is gone and he is well! Oh, God will do it when you trust Him.

Nicodemus said, "I am a ruler in Israel. Don't you think I could get there without looking to a crucified Saviour?"

No, the Son of Man has to be lifted up on the cross. The snake pictures Jesus on the cross.

You say, "Well, Brother Rice, you said a snake is a type of sin."

I know it, but Jesus became sin for you and me. I sinned. He took my place. When Jesus was nailed to the cross, all the sin of the world was laid on Him. When Moses lifted up the snake on the pole, whosoever looked at the snake on the pole got well of the snake bite. So everybody who looks to Jesus by faith becomes free from sin and in God's sight becomes a new creature.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God loves you. Isn't that good news? Sometimes my heart gets so hungry for somebody to love me. People think that preachers are hard to get along with. We weep until we can weep no more. I wish sometimes that I could lay myself down to die for men. I preach out my heart. Preachers wear their hearts on their sleeves. Sometimes our preaching is an idle show to many people. I preach and pour out my heart for others and then it seems there is nobody to love me and to bear my burdens. Every preacher knows that. And here the Scripture says:

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

You say, "Does God love me?" Yes, He does. Isn't that good news? Wonderful news! Tonight your past may be as black as black can be. Your sins may have been piled as high as the mountain overhanging the sea, but God gave His Son for you, too. Isaiah 1:18 says:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

God loves you! Isn't that wonderful? He didn't say that He loved only good people. He said that He loved sinners. "God so loved the world." That means everybody. He loved you and me and He gave his best gift, His only begotten Son, to die to save sinners. That sounds too good to be true. Only believe.

Somebody said to me once, "Brother Rice, you make it too easy for people to be saved."

"No, I didn't make it easy," I said. "Jesus died to make it easy." It wasn't easy for Him. God loves you and Jesus died for you that you might be saved. "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish." Trust Jesus. He does the rest. He said to Nicodemus, "Do you want a new heart?" All he had to do was to look at the snake on the pole, Christ on the cross, and believe in Him. "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." That is the way to be saved.

When a young couple come to get married, the preacher says to the young man, "Do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife, to love, honor and cherish her through good and evil report, through poverty and wealth, through sickness and health until death do you part?"

And he says, "I do."

Then the minister says to the girl, "Do you take this man to be your lawfully wedded husband, to love, cherish and obey him through good and evil report, through poverty and wealth, through sickness and health until death do you part?"

And she says, "I do."

Then after prayer, the preacher says, "I pronounce you man and wife."

That is faith. The man says to the girl, "I love you and want you to be my wife. I will be good to you."

The mother says, "Daughter, you

had better not marry that fellow. He has no money laid by. He can't take good care of you like I do."

But the daughter says, "No, I am going to risk him."

The mother says, "You had better beware."

The girl says, "I will trust him. I love him."

So when the preacher says, "Will you take him," she says, "I will."

God tonight says, "Lord Jesus, will you take this sinner?"

The Lord answers back, "Yes.

I love him. I died for him. I paid for all his sins. I am willing to forgive him if he will take me."

And God says, "Sinner, will you take such a Saviour as that?"

And if you say tonight, "I do," God will pronounce you married to Christ and will make you a child of God.

"Well," you say, "What about my heart being changed?" Don't you worry about that. God changes the heart. John 1:12 says:

"As many as receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

God will make you a child of God. He has to change the heart. You can not do it. Like the people looked to the snake on the pole to heal them, so you trust Christ and He will do the rest. If you want God to change your heart, He will. You cannot, but He can. He can make you love the truth when you now love a lie. He can make you want to do right. I have seen Him make drunkards sober and they didn't want to drink any more. I have seen Him make fallen women pure and clean. Some of the purest people in heart I have ever known were awful sinners before they were saved. It is wonderful that God loves sinners. He will make you, a sinner, into a child of God and will make you fit for Heaven and give you a new heart. Look to Jesus and be saved.

I have spoken long enough. How many here tonight will say, "Preacher, thank God I know I am a sinner but I am a forgiven sinner. God has given me a new heart and I love Him. I know I am a Christian inside. God has fixed my heart and made me love Him?"

I don't mean that you are sinless. I mean, has God given you a new heart? Have you trusted Him? How many can say that you have done that? Oh, that is wonderful. And how many of the rest of you will say, "I will look to Jesus now and be saved"? Now let us pray.

(A number were saved; ten or twelve adults coming forward.)

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